

Highway 191 Corridor

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State Highway 191 runs north-south through the planning jurisdiction east of the Gallatin River, leading to Big Sky and Yellowstone National Park to the south and providing access to Bozeman, Belgrade, and the interstate to the north and east. The location of a major state highway providing access to areas of high recreational value to the south and access to the outside world to the north place Gallatin Gateway in context as it continues to see growth pressure.

This plan recognizes that Highway 191 is a major transportation route bisecting Gallatin Gateway. Additionally, Highway 191 serves as the gateway to Gallatin Gateway. As the community grows, necessary improvements should be made to ensure maximum safety. Additionally, while the area fronting Highway 191 is a natural location for commercial use, the following policies ensure that new development does not follow the standard pattern of strip commercial:

5.1 Land Use Map

5.2 Commercial Development Along Highway 191

5.3 Highway 191 Improvements

Policy 5.1. Land Use Map

Adopt a land use map designating two land use classifications within the Highway 191 Corridor. Generally, the boundaries of these subdistricts area are defined as Cottonwood Road south for one mile along 191, and Gooch Hill Road north to the northern boundary of the planning jurisdiction. Both subdistricts extend one half mile one either side of Highway 191.

Land along the Highway 191 corridor requires special consideration in order to ensure orderly commercial development occurs without infringing on the values discussed by this plan. Two land use classifications are defined.

Northern Highway District. This classification includes several large parcels west and north of the Peak View Subdivision along Highway 191, and is the area first encountered by visitors and traffic approaching Gallatin Gateway from the north. Approximately 180 acres have been placed under conservation easement, and a number of parcels west of Highway 191 are constrained by the Gallatin River floodplain. There is, however, significant highway frontage and buildable land both on the bench above the river (west of Highway 191) and on properties east of Highway 191. The area is pressured by growth from the Four Corners area to the north, and by significant high-speed traffic passing on to Big Sky. Commercial uses and mixed commercial/residential uses will be allowed, though specific design standards (described below in Policy 5.2) will be adopted to prevent standard strip commercial.

Southern Highway District. This classification includes land extending from Cottonwood Road south for one mile. This area plays a different role than the

Northern Highway District in that it does not have the immediate pressures of development from Four Corners. Traffic reaching this area is primarily through traffic to the south. Given the reality of highway frontage, this land use classification will allow some commercial development along the highway, though standards will be adopted requiring certain design elements to mitigate the safety issue raised by extended strip commercial.

Consideration should be given to future development as the Town Core grows. Continuity of flow for density of residential development away from the highway and to the south should consider view shed, open areas, connectivity with the Town Core, walking paths, access to the Gallatin River and recreational space along the Gallatin River.

Policy 5.2. Commercial Development Along Highway 191

Strip development consists of commercial uses that are one lot deep, have separate access to the highway (resulting in numerous places where vehicles attempt to enter the flow of traffic), and display numerous large signs. Strip development often has a continuous curb cut (allowing vehicles to enter or leave the road at numerous points and angles), little if any landscaping, and no provision for pedestrian or bicycle movement to the businesses or through the area. While several of these issues will be constrained by policies of the Montana Department of Transportation, this plan will supplement those policies further.

This plan recognizes the difference in the types of businesses locating in the downtown core versus on property along the highway. Given the reality of through traffic to the south, businesses along the highway will develop to serve that traffic. To ensure new development along Highway 191 meets the goal of discouraging strip commercial, the following actions will be taken:

- 5.2.1 **Commercial Nodes.** The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has limited the number of access points from adjacent properties onto Highway 191. As new development occurs along the Highway 191 corridor, commercial uses shall be clustered around existing MDT encroachments.
- 5.2.2 **Site Design.** The development standards and land use map will require the use of frontage roads connecting structures and properties, deep lots, landscaped buffers, and other site planning tactics along Highway 191 to ensure that strip development is discouraged. Additionally, the development standards will encourage parking lots and other impervious surfaces to be placed along the rear or side of structures.
- 5.2.3 **Connections.** New development along Highway 191 must have safe, functional access for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists through the site, as well as have safe, functional connections with adjoining developments.
- 5.2.4 **Landscaping.** The development standards will require landscaping for new commercial uses fronting Highway 191

Policy 5.3 Highway 191 Improvements

Improvements to state highways are implemented when a specific set of warrants are met. This policy calls for applications for high-traffic developments accessing Highway 191 to include a traffic impact study specifically analyzing impacts to the highway. The following improvements have been identified by the Gallatin Gateway community as potentially necessary as warrants are met:

- 5.3.1 **General Improvements.** The following improvement is located on Highway 191 but are not located within either the Highway 191 North or Highway 191 South subdistricts.
 - 5.3.1.a Install a stoplight at the Mill Street/Highway 191 intersection, with a preemptive Traffic Device to allow the Gallatin Gateway Fire Department safer access to the highway.
- 5.3.2 **Northern Highway Subdistrict.** The following improvements are suggested for Cottonwood Road north to Axtell-Anceny Road section of Highway 191 as warrants are met:
 - 5.3.2.a Consider extension the 50 mph speed zone north to Axtell-Anceny Road and south to Cottonwood Road.
 - 5.3.2.b Install signage at both ends of the speed zone to indicate “congested area next 2 miles” or “dangerous intersection ahead”.
 - 5.3.2.c As warrants are met, consider installing turning lanes at the intersections of Highway 191 and Axtell-Anceny Road, Zachariah Lane, and Cottonwood Road.
 - 5.3.1.d Continue evaluating the Mill Street/Highway 191/Rabel Lane intersection. To the west, Mill Street services the elementary school, the fire station, the Gallatin Gateway Community Center, and businesses and homes in town, as well as the Gallatin River and a network of rural roads. To the east, this intersection services the Post Office, various businesses, and residences. This intersection was recently given a Level of Service performance grade of C/C (a.m./p.m.). More growth is expected in the future in that area, and increased traffic could quickly diminish the LOS to a failing grade
 - 5.3.2.e Continue to require traffic impact studies for all major development and install road improvements as determined by traffic studies.
- 5.3.3 **Southern Highway Subdistrict.** The following improvements to Highway 191 are suggested for Cottonwood Road south to the southern

edge of the district:

- 5.3.3.a Eliminate the speed differential between cars and trucks on Highway 191, by posting a day speed of 65 mph and night speed of 60 mph.
- 5.3.3.b As warrants are met, consider installing turning lanes at the intersections of Highway 191 and Low Bench Road, Williams Road, and Gateway South Road.